IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1, 10, 15, 21, 22, 33, 35, and 36, without prejudice, and please add new Claim 37, as provided in the following Listing of Claims. No new matter has been added.

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A method of providing a user with a game of chance, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving electronic signals from a user system representing search parameters descriptive of a product;

retrieving at least one product information from at least one database storing independent third-party retail vendor product information;

transmitting electronic signals to the user system representing the retrieved product information and associated prices;

automatically providing the user with an option to play a game to win a selected product from said product information without the user first making any payment or requesting the option;

electronically calculating a dynamic probability of winning the selected product by the user based on one or more factors selected from a group consisting of: the cost of the selected product in relation to the total cost of all products available, a current prize budget, a ratio of the current prize budget to a total amount of funds received, and the user's behavior during a user session;

electronically <u>and randomly</u> generating a trial outcome of an event trial, the probability of

the event trial generating a winning trial outcome corresponding to the calculated probability of

winning;

generating an outcome indicator ~~independent of, and differently distributed from, the trial~~

~~outcome~~, <u>wherein the outcome indicator is generated independently of the trial outcome, and</u>

<u>wherein the outcome indicator is representative of a winning trial outcome or a losing trial</u>

<u>outcome, and further wherein the outcome indicator for a winning trial outcome has a</u>

<u>distribution associated with a first statistical distribution and the trial outcome has a distribution</u>

<u>associated with a second statistical distribution, and further wherein the first statistical</u>

<u>distribution has a distribution which is different from the second statistical distribution</u>; <u>and</u>

displaying the outcome indicator to the user; and in response to a winning trial outcome,

purchasing the selected product for the user from the independent third-party retail vendor at no

cost to the user.

Claim 2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the probability of winning on

successive plays of the game increases with the value derived from the user's interaction with the

system.

Claim 3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the display comprises a user-

chosen number and a comparison number, such that a winning outcome is indicated by

displaying a comparison number that matches the user-chosen number, and a losing outcome is

indicated by displaying a comparison number that does not match the user-chosen number.

Claim 4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein an increased probability of winning on successive plays of the game is indicated by displaying a comparison number having at least one digit matching the corresponding at least one digit of the user-selected number.

Claim 5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, wherein the probability of winning is different than one divided by ten raised to the power of the number of digits in the comparison number.

Claim 6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, comprising providing the user with an opportunity to increase the chances of winning by performing a task for which a third party provides compensation to the provider of the game of chance.

Claim 7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, comprising calculating a probability of winning based on at least a current budget.

Claim 8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, comprising calculating a probability P of winning based on a total number of game players.

Claim 9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, comprising calculating a probability P of winning based on:

$$P= \frac{P_a * P_t * P_m}{N} + P_u$$

where:

P_a is a probability factor that varies with the cost of the selected product in

relation to the total cost of all products available;

Pt is a probability factor that varies with a current prize budget;

Pm is a probability factor that varies with a ratio of the current prize budget to a

total amount of funds received;

Pu is probability factor that varies with the user's behavior during a user session;

and

N is a number of current users.

Claim 10. (Currently Amended) A method of providing a user with a game of chance, the method comprising:

receiving electronic signals from a user system representing at least one search parameter descriptive of a product;

retrieving at least one product information from at least one database storing independent third-party retail vendor product information;

transmitting electronic signals to the user system representing at a least one product, a price of the product and the independent third-party retail vendor of the product;

automatically transmitting electronic signals representing at least a first option for the user to play a game to win the product without the user first making any payment or requesting the first option, and a second option to purchase the product;

if the user chooses to play the game:

electronically calculating a dynamic probability of winning the product by the

user based on one or more factors selected from a group consisting of: the cost of the

selected product in relation to the total cost of all products available, a current prize budget, a ratio of the current prize budget to a total amount of funds received and the user's behavior during a user session;

electronically generating a trial outcome, the probability of the trial outcome generating a winning trial outcome corresponding to the calculated probability of winning;

generating an outcome indicator ~~independent of, and differently distributed from, the trial outcome,~~ wherein the outcome indicator is generated independently of the trial outcome, and wherein the outcome indicator is representative of a winning trial outcome or a losing trial outcome, and further wherein the outcome indicator for a winning trial outcome has a distribution associated with a first statistical distribution and the trial outcome has a distribution associated with a second statistical distribution, and further wherein the first statistical distribution has a distribution which is different from the second statistical distribution;

displaying the outcome indicator to the user; and

in response to a winning trial outcome, purchasing the product for the user from the independent third-party retail vendor at no cost to the user; and

if the user chooses to purchase the product instead of playing the game:

directing the user to a web site which sells the product.

Claim 11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, comprising providing the user with an opportunity to increase the chances of winning on successive plays of the game by performing a task for which a third party provides compensation to the provider of the game of chance.

Claim 12. (Canceled).

Claim 13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, comprising calculating a probability P of winning based on a total number of game players.

Claim 14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, comprising calculating a probability P of winning based on:

$$P = \frac{P_a * P_t * P_m}{N} + P_u$$

where:

P_a is a probability factor that varies with the cost of the selected product in relation to the total cost of all products available;

P_t is a probability factor that varies with a current prize budget;

P_m is a probability factor that varies with a ratio of the current prize budget to a total amount of funds received;

P_u is probability factor that varies with the user's behavior during a user session; and

N is a number of current users.

Claim 15. (Currently Amended) A method of providing a user with a game of chance, the method comprising:

receiving electronic signals from a user system representing at least one search parameter descriptive of a product;

retrieving at least one product information from at least one database storing independent third-party retail vendor product information;

transmitting electronic signals to the user system representing a plurality of different independent third-party retail vendors and associated prices charged by each of said different independent third-party retail vendors for products identified in response to said at least one search parameter;

automatically transmitting electronic signals to the user system representing an option to play a game to win a selected one of said products without the user first making any payment or requesting the option; and

if the user chooses to play the game:

electronically calculating a dynamic probability of winning said selected one product by the user based on one or more factors selected from a group consisting of: the cost of the selected product in relation to the total cost of all products available, a current prize budget, a ratio of the current prize budget to a total amount of funds received and the user's behavior during a user session;

electronically generating a trial outcome, the probability of the trial outcome generating a winning trial outcome corresponding to the calculated probability of winning;

generating an outcome indicator ~~independent of, and differently distributed from, the trial outcome,~~ <u>wherein the outcome indicator is generated independently of the trial outcome, and wherein the outcome indicator is representative of a winning trial outcome or a losing trial outcome, and further wherein the outcome indicator for a winning trial outcome has a distribution associated with a first statistical distribution and the trial</u>

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outcome has a distribution associated with a second statistical distribution, and further wherein the first statistical distribution has a distribution which is different from the second statistical distribution;

displaying the outcome indicator to the user; and

in response to a winning trial outcome, purchasing said selected one product from a corresponding independent third-party retail vendor for the user at no cost to the user.

Claim 16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, comprising providing the user with an opportunity to increase the chances of winning by performing a task for which a third party provides compensation to the provider of the game of chance.

Claim 17. (Canceled).

Claim 18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, comprising calculating a probability P of winning based on a total number of game players.

Claim 19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, comprising calculating a probability P of winning based on:

$$P = \frac{P_a * P_t * P_m}{N} + P_u$$

where:

Pa is a probability factor that varies with the cost of the selected product in relation to the total cost of all products available;

Pt is a probability factor that varies with a current prize budget;

Pm is a probability factor that varies with a ratio of the current prize budget to a

total amount of funds received;

Pu is probability factor that varies with the user's behavior during a user session;

and

N is a number of current users.

Claim 20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, wherein the electronic signals representing the associated prices charged by each of said different dealers, represent the prices charged on said each of said different dealers' own web sites.

Claim 21. (Currently Amended) A method of providing a user with a game of chance, the method comprising:

receiving electronic signals from a user system representing at least one search parameter descriptive of a product;

searching for products matching said at least one search parameter;

transmitting electronic signals to the user system representing a plurality of independent third-party retail vendors and associated prices charged by each of said independent third-party retail vendors for products identified in response to said at least one search parameter, each of the products identified being offered for sale on a corresponding web site of each independent third-party retail vendor;

automatically transmitting electronic signals to the user representing an option to play a game to win a selected one of said products without the user first making any payment or requesting the option; and

if the user chooses to play the game:

electronically calculating a dynamic probability of winning said selected one product by the user based on one or more factors selected from a group consisting of: the cost of the selected product in relation to the total cost of all products available, a current prize budget, a ratio of the current prize budget to a total amount of funds received and the user's behavior during a user session;

electronically generating a trial outcome, the probability of the trial outcome generating a winning trial outcome corresponding to the calculated probability of winning;

generating an outcome indicator ~~independent of, and differently distributed from, the trial outcome~~, wherein the outcome indicator is generated independently of the trial outcome, and wherein the outcome indicator is representative of a winning trial outcome or a losing trial outcome, and further wherein the outcome indicator for a winning trial outcome has a distribution associated with a first statistical distribution and the trial outcome has a distribution associated with a second statistical distribution, and further wherein the first statistical distribution has a distribution which is different from the second statistical distribution;

displaying the outcome indicator to the user; and

in response to a winning trial outcome, purchasing said selected one product from a corresponding independent third-party retail vendor for the user at no cost to the user.

Claim 22. (Currently Amended) A method for providing a user an opportunity to win a product or service by playing a game of chance without buying the product or service and without paying a fee to play, comprising the steps of:

enabling the user to submit a search query associated with a type of product or service;

conducting a search in a database for an independent third-party retail vendor product or service that satisfies the search query;

automatically presenting a result of the search to the user, including at least one product or service offered for sale by the independent third-party retail vendor retrieved from the database, along with an option to play the game;

enabling the user to select the product or service that he wants to win;

dynamically determining the user's chance of winning the selected product or service based on one or more factors selected from a group consisting of: the cost of the selected product in relation to the total cost of all products available, a current prize budget, a ratio of the current prize budget to a total amount of funds received and the user's behavior during a user session;

generating a trial outcome for each play of the game wherein the probability of the trial outcome generating a winning trial outcome corresponds to the user's chance of winning;

generating an outcome indicator ~~independent of, and differently distributed from, the trial outcome,~~ <u>wherein the outcome indicator is generated independently of the trial outcome, and wherein the outcome indicator is representative of a winning trial outcome or a losing trial outcome, and further wherein the outcome indicator for a winning trial outcome has a distribution associated with a first statistical distribution and the trial outcome has a distribution associated with a second statistical distribution, and further wherein the first statistical distribution has a distribution which is different from the second statistical distribution</u>; and

displaying the outcome indicator to the user.

Claim 23. (Previously presented) The method for providing a user an opportunity to win a product or service of claim 22 further comprising the step of purchasing the selected product or service for the user, and at no cost to the user, if the outcome for the play of the game is a win.

Claim 24. (Previously Presented) The method for providing a user an opportunity to win a product or service of claim 22 further comprising the step of enabling the user to increase the chance of winning the selected product or service through repeated plays of the game.

Claim 25. (Previously Presented) The method for providing a user an opportunity to win a product or service of claim 22 wherein the step of determining the user's chance of winning the selected product or service is a function of at least one of a cost of the product or service, a number of other users playing to win the product or service concurrently, a current prize budget and an amount of funds received from an advertising sponsor.

Claim 26. (Previously Presented) The method for providing a user an opportunity to win a product or service of claim 25 wherein the advertising sponsor provides funds for the purchase of the selected product or service to a game provider as a payment for a display of an advertisement to the user during each play of the game.

Claim 27. (Previously Presented) The method for providing a user an opportunity to win a product or service of claim 25 wherein the step of determining the user's chance of winning the selected product or service is a function of the user's behavior during repeated plays of the game.

Claim 28. (Previously presented) The method for providing a user an opportunity to win a product or service of claim 26 wherein the user's repeated plays of the game generates revenue from the advertising sponsor paid to a game provider which increases the user's chance of winning the selected product or service.

Claim 29. (Previously Presented) The method for providing a user an opportunity to win a product or service of claim 22 wherein the game of chance comprises displaying a number selected by the user along with the number generated to represent the outcome for each play of the game.

Claim 30. (Previously Presented) The method for providing a user an opportunity to win a product or service of claim 29 wherein the user can increase the probability of winning the product or service by participating in an online survey for an advertising sponsor.

Claim 31. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising collecting a database of independent third party retail vendor product information prior to receiving the search parameters from the user.

Claim 32. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 1 whereby transmitting electronic signal as representing product info and said automatically providing an option to play is by transmitting a webpage containing at least a link to a webpage of the independent third party retail vendor and a link to initiate playing to win the same product.

Claim 33. (Currently Amended) A method for increasing user traffic to a search engine website, comprising:

receiving a search query from a user system interacting with a search webpage of the website, the search query defining a desired product for the user; and

transmitting a results webpage to the user system, the results [[page]] webpage including at least one link for redirection to an independent third party vendor website where the user system can interact with at least one webpage to purchase a corresponding product and further including in the same webpage a play link corresponding to the independent third party vendor link for redirection to a webpage which allows the user to play a game of chance to win the product at no cost to the user, the link corresponding to the independent third party website redirection link[[.]];

electronically calculating a dynamic probability of winning the corresponding product by the user;

electronically and randomly generating a trial outcome of an event trial, the probability of the event trial generating a winning trial outcome corresponding to a determined probability of winning;

generating an outcome indicator wherein the outcome indicator is generated independently of the trial outcome, and wherein the outcome indicator is representative of a

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winning trial outcome or a losing trial outcome, and further wherein the outcome indicator for a winning trial outcome has a distribution associated with a first statistical distribution and the trial outcome has a distribution associated with a second statistical distribution, and further wherein the first statistical distribution has a distribution which is different from the second statistical distribution;

    displaying the outcome indicator to the user; and

    in response to a winning trial outcome, purchasing the selected product for the user from the independent third-party retail vendor at no cost to the user.

Claim 34. (Previously presented) The method of claim 33, wherein said play link webpage is provided by the search engine website and wherein the search engine website calculates the outcome of the game of chance for a user system selecting to play to win the product and further wherein if the user outcome is favorable the search engine website facilitating the purchase of the product from the independent third party vendor corresponding to the independent third party website redirection link.

Claim 35. (Currently Amended) A method for increasing user traffic to a search website, comprising:

    providing a search webpage containing a search interface for a user to submit a search query for a product;

    receiving a search query from a user employing said search webpage;

    searching independent third party websites by reference to said query;

retrieving product information and corresponding price from ~~said~~ the independent third party websites for at least one products satisfying said query;

providing a game of chance in response to a user selection of the link to win the product; ~~and~~

purchasing the product from the independent third party for the user response to a favorable outcome in said game;

transmitting at least one results webpage to the user, the results webpage including at least one link for the product information, a corresponding price, a link to the independent third party website, and a link to win the product;

providing a game of chance in response to a user selection of the link to win the product, wherein the probability of winning the product by the user is dynamically calculated based on one or more factors selected from a group consisting of: the cost of the selected product in relation to the total cost of all products available, a current prize budget, a ratio of the current prize budget to a total amount of funds received and the user's behavior during a user session;

generating an outcome indicator ~~independent of, and differently distributed from, the probability of winning~~, wherein the outcome indicator is generated independently of the probability of winning, and wherein the outcome indicator is representative of a winning trial outcome or a losing trial outcome, and further wherein the outcome indicator for a winning trial outcome has a distribution associated with a first statistical distribution and the probability of winning has a distribution associated with a second statistical distribution, and further wherein the first statistical distribution has a distribution which is different from the second statistical distribution;

displaying the outcome indicator to the user; and

purchasing the product from the independent third party for the user in response to a favorable outcome in said game and providing said product to the user at no cost to the user.

Claim 36. (Currently Amended) A product search website executing on a server storing a plurality of web pages, the website compromising:

a search page for a user submitting a query to the server for at least one product;

a results webpage transmitted to the user, the results page including links to an independent third party website and a link to a play webpage of the website;

a play webpage providing a game of chance for winning the <u>at least one </u>product corresponding to a selected play link from the results webpage, wherein [[the]] <u>a </u>probability of winning the <u>at least one </u>product by the user is dynamically calculated based on one or more factors selected from a group consisting of: the cost of the selected product in relation to the total cost of all products available, a current prize budget, a ratio of the current prize budget to a total amount of funds received and the user's behavior during a user session; and

a product win webpage to <s>displaying</s> <u>display </u>an outcome indicator indicating a favorable outcome in said game of chance for [[said]] <u>the at least one </u>product, <s>the outcome indicator</s> <s>independent of, and differently distributed from, the probability of winning.</s> <u>wherein the outcome</u> <u>indicator is generated independently of the probability of winning, and wherein the outcome</u> <u>indicator is representative of a winning trial outcome or a losing trial outcome, and further</u> <u>wherein the outcome indicator for a favorable outcome has a distribution associated with a first</u> <u>statistical distribution and the probability of winning has a distribution associated with a second</u> <u>statistical distribution, and further wherein the first statistical distribution has a distribution</u> <u>which is different from the second statistical distribution.</u>

Claim 37. (New) A computer-implemented method, comprising the steps of:

receiving a search request for a product, wherein the search request is transmitted from a communication device associated with or used by a user;

processing the search request with a processing device;

generating a message, wherein the message contains information regarding at least one product offered by a retail vendor, product information regarding the at least one product, and at least one price associated with the at least one product;

transmitting the message to the communication device;

automatically providing the user with an option to play a game to win a selected product from the product information regarding the at least one product without the user first making any payment or requesting the option;

electronically calculating a dynamic probability of winning the selected product by the user based on one or more factors selected from a group consisting of: the cost of the selected product in relation to the total cost of all products available, a current prize budget, a ratio of the current prize budget to a total amount of funds received, and the user's behavior during a user session;

electronically and randomly generating a trial outcome for a game of chance, wherein the probability of the game of chance generating a winning trial outcome corresponds to the calculated probability of winning;

generating an outcome indicator, wherein the outcome indicator is generated independently of the trial outcome, and wherein the outcome indicator is representative of a winning trial outcome or a losing trial outcome, and further wherein the outcome indicator for a

winning trial outcome has a distribution associated with a first statistical distribution and the trial outcome has a distribution associated with a second statistical distribution, and further wherein the first statistical distribution has a distribution which is different from the second statistical distribution;

      displaying the outcome indicator to the user; and

      in response to a winning trial outcome, purchasing the selected product for the user from the independent third-party retail vendor at no cost to the user.